NAPSNet Daily Report 08 January, 2003

Recommended Citation

"NAPSNet Daily Report 08 January, 2003", NAPSNet Daily Report, January 08, 2003,
https://nautilus.org/napsnet/napsnet-daily-report/napsnet-daily-report-08-january-2003/

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I. United States

1. ROK-Japan-US Joint Statement on DPRK

The Washington File ("US, SOUTH KOREA, JAPAN SAY NORTH KOREAN NUCLEAR ACTIONS UNACCEPTABLE," Washington, 1/7/03) reported that high-level delegations from the US, ROK and Japan said in a joint statement January 7 that the DPRK's relations with the entire international community depend on its taking "prompt and verifiable action" to dismantle its nuclear weapons programs and comply with its nuclear safeguards commitments. The officials, meeting in Washington as the Trilateral Coordination and Oversight Group, expressed strong support for the January 6 International Atomic Energy Agency resolution calling on Pyongyang to come into full compliance with its nuclear nonproliferation agreements. They said "the unanimous passage of the

resolution underscores the broad international consensus that the North Korean actions are unacceptable." The three delegations said they continue to support ROK-DPRK dialogue and Japan-DPRK dialogue. "The US delegation," the statement said, "explained that the United States is willing to talk to North Korea about how it will meet its obligations to the international community. However, the US delegation stressed that the United States will not provide quid pro quos to North Korea to live up to its existing obligations."

The full text of the joint statement can be found:
http://usinfo.state.gov/cgi-bin/washfile/display.pl?p=/products/washfile/geog/ea&f=03010702.eea&t=/products/washfile/newsitem.shtml

2. US on DPRK-US Relations

The New York Times (Steven R. Weisman, "US, IN A SHIFT, IS WILLING TO TALK WITH NORTH KOREA ABOUT A-ARMS," Washington, 01/08/03), The Washington Post (Glenn Kessler, "US BACKS DIRECT TALKS WITH NORTH KOREA SHIFT AIMS TO EASE NUCLEAR STANDOFF," 01/08/03), The Associated Press (Barry Schweid, "US OPEN TO DIALOGUE WITH NORTH KOREA," Washington, 01/08/03) Reuters (Steve Holland, "US SAYS IT'S UP TO NORTH KOREA TO SEEK DIALOGUE," Washington, 01/08/03), and BBC News ("ALLIES WELCOME US SHIFT ON NORTH KOREA," 01/08/03) reported that the Bush administration said yesterday that it would agree to direct talks with the DPRK on how the they could meet its nuclear obligations, a subtle shift in position designed to give both sides a face-saving way to resolve the standoff over the DPRK's weapons programs. In a statement issued after a meeting in Washington with Japanese and ROK diplomats, the State Department stressed that the talks would not be a negotiation and that "the United States will not provide quid pro quos to North Korea to live up to its existing obligations" to shut down its nuclear programs. Even so, the statement suggested that the administration is eager to find a way out of the diplomatic box created by its uncompromising stance on striking a deal with the DPRK government. The DPRK has demanded direct talks with the US -- a position supported by other countries in the region, especially the ROK The significance of yesterday's announcement, one official said, is that the administration believes the moment has come to provide "clarity [to the North Koreans] in more formalized talks." State Department officials, moreover, have also worked out options on how to proceed with discussions -- including what incentives to offer the DPRK -- if the DPRK government responds positively. The announcement came after the DPRK issued a warning of war if the US and its allies impose economic sanctions in response to the DPRK's ouster of international inspectors and restarting of the nuclear facility. "Sanctions mean a war," said a statement released by the official Korean Central News Agency. "The war knows no mercy."

3. DPRK Response to US Talk Offer

Reuters (Kim Yeon-hee, "NORTH KOREA DENOUNCES US AFTER TALKS OFFER," Seoul, 01/08/03) reported that the DPRK accused the US Wednesday of increasing the danger of war on the Korean peninsula, just hours after the US changed tack and signaled a willingness to talk about their nuclear standoff. The DPRK's Korean Central News Agency news agency made no mention of the US offer, nor of the U.N. watchdog's deadline for it to readmit nuclear inspectors within weeks, but decried Washington's "racket of a nuclear threat." The US administration, which had previously insisted the DPRK roll back recent steps to revive its nuclear weapons plans before any talks, announced its new position Tuesday after holding talks in Washington with the ROK and Japan. But it insisted that it would not allow the DPRK's nuclear program to become a bargaining chip. "The 'nuclear issue' that renders the situation on the Korean peninsula strained is a product of the US strategy to dominate the world whereby it is working hard to bring a holocaust of a nuclear war to

the Korean nation, calling for a pre-emptive nuclear strike after deploying lots of nuclear weapons in and around South Korea," KCNA said. Meanwhile, the DPRK denounced Japan for meddling in its business. "The nuclear crisis on the Korean peninsula arose because of the United States and it has nothing to do with Japan," the ROK's Yonhap news agency quoted Pyongyang Radio as saying. "Japan has the effrontery to intervene in the nuclear matter and complicate the issue. It is none of their business." Yonhap said ROK president-elect Roh Moo-hyun would meet two Japanese delegations next week to discuss the crisis.

4. ROK on DPRK Situation

The Associated Press (Sang-Huh Choe, "SOUTH KOREA CALLS FOR CLOSER ALLIANCE WITH US AS NORTH KOREA ATTEMPTS TO DRIVE WEDGE," Seoul, 01/08/03) reported that the ROK's Defense Ministry called for a stronger alliance with the US, while the DPRK stepped up its campaign Wednesday to bring the ROK to its side in a standoff with the US. The ROK ministry backed the presence of US troops in the ROK, saying their withdrawal "could send foreign investors flooding out of the country in fear of instability, throw the economy into turmoil and give North Korea a chance for provocation." "North Korea tries to weaken the South Korea-US alliance's capability of deterring war," it said in a commentary in the January issue of the ministry's "Defense News," distributed Wednesday.

5. Japan on DPRK Situation

The Associated Press (Nirmala George, "JAPANESE FOREIGN MINISTER SAYS NORTH KOREA SHOULD DISMANTLE NUCLEAR WEAPONS PROGRAM, COMPLY WITH AGREEMENTS," New Delhi, 01/08/03) reported that Japan wants the DPRK to comply with commitments to dismantle its nuclear weapons development program and is waiting for it to respond to a US offer of dialogue, the Japanese foreign minister said Wednesday. "We are awaiting the reaction of the North Korean government to the offer of a dialogue," Foreign Minister Yoriko Kawaguchi said while addressing business leaders during a two-day visit to India. Japan has worked closely with the US and the ROK in an effort to resolve the crisis that erupted in October when the DPRK admitted it had a secret, uranium-based nuclear weapons program. The US has said that violates a 1994 accord. "We feel it is important for North Korea to dismantle its nuclear weapons development program in a verifiable manner," Kawaguchi said. She added that Japan wants the DPRK to comply with all international agreements it has signed, and wants the crisis to be resolved peacefully.

6. Inter-Korean Family Separation

The Associated Press (DIVIDED FAMILIES CAUGHT IN N. KOREA CRISIS," Seoul, 01/08/03) reported that the DPRK's push to reactivate its nuclear facilities has undercut a fragile family reunion reconciliation process with the ROK. Shin Hee-yeon pores over the remnants of a fractured family -- faded photographs of brothers whisked away for duty by communist troops at the outbreak of the Korean War in 1950. Just last month, the 74-year-old thought she'd might soon have a chance to see them. But like many ROK citizens awaiting temporary reunions with relatives in the DPRK, her hopes have been all but dashed by the nuclear standoff with the DPRK. Plans for the next round of reunions, originally slated for next month, are on hold, and even talks about restarting them are in limbo, the Red Cross said Monday. North Korea's push to reactivate its nuclear facilities has done more than riled Western allies -- it also has undercut a fragile reconciliation process on the divided Korean Peninsula. "They can't just cancel the meetings. It's too cruel," said Shin, wiping away tears as she looked at a photo of her youngest brother. "I can't describe my sorrow."

7. US Troops in ROK

The New York Times (James Brooke, "US TROOPS IN SOUTH KOREA ENCOUNTER INCREASED HOSTILITY," Seoul, 01/08/03) reported that US Lt. Col. Steven Boylan's combat patch comes from flying helicopters in El Salvador, but his parents think his Purple Heart should come from walking the streets of Seoul. That became clear one night last month when three ROK men cornered him in a tunnel on his way home. "They started cussing me in English, `G.I. get out, G.I. go home,' " the colonel, a 41-year-old Wisconsin native, recalled today. "They attacked me, and I made a defensive maneuver. It was only when I made it back to post that I saw I had been stabbed." The world worries about whether the ROK is making nuclear weapons. Television correspondents do live stand-ups from the demilitarized zone, the "last cold war frontier." But to hear some G.I.'s tell it, the highest risk of violence is on the streets of ROK cities, where political leaders have allowed anti-Americanism to run unchecked. "They are being spat on," Colonel Boylan said. "They are being cussed at. They are being hit." He has become a one-man clearinghouse for abuse reports, partly because of his stabbing and partly because of his high-profile job as the Eighth Army's public affairs officer. "People are not allowed entry into restaurants," he said. "A soldier coming to work had some guys jump out of their car and start beating on her car." Most of the G.I.'s interviewed here could recount several troubling incidents, but many also said they generally felt quite safe. "My daughter who is 16 can go out at night with her girlfriends by subway without any problems," said Lt. Col. Francis J. Smith Jr., 50, a Special Forces officer. "She can't do that back home in Philadelphia."

8. PRC Call for Democratization

The New York Times (Chris Buckley, "RETIRED AIDE TO MAO CALLS FOR PROGRESS TO DEMOCRACY," Beijing, 01/08/03) reported that a former secretary to Mao has published a strikingly forthright call for change in a Beijing magazine this month, the latest sign of growing demands for open discussion of political reform. The retired official, Li Rui, 85, warned in a speech published in the magazine China Chronicle that the country must embrace democratic politics and free speech to avoid stagnation and possible collapse. "Only with democratization can there be modernization," he said. "This has been a global tide since the 20th century, especially the Second World War, and those who join it will prosper while those who resist will perish." Li, a Communist Party member since 1937, is a longtime advocate of faster political liberalization. He has been held at arm's length by party leaders, but his status as a confidant of Mao and a pugnacious critic of conservatives inside the party have given him a degree of protection from censorship, and a large readership. Li's call to action comes at a sensitive time when many officials and academics here are waiting to see if China's new leaders, installed at a party congress in November, will consider relaxing one-party rule. Li made his comments in a speech to a group of delegates at the congress. He warned that China's stability could be imperiled by delaying political change. In recent official announcements, Communist Party leaders have said the party must strengthen internal debate and make selection of officials more competitive. But they have not shown any signs of contemplating wider changes. Li challenged them to lead the way with major reforms starting at the top. He proposed formally limiting the party's leaders to a maximum tenure of 10 years. He also proposed wide-ranging measures to limit the party's powers, begin introducing popular election of government officials and protect freedom of speech and independent rule of law.

9. Japan-RF Relations

Reuters (Elaine Lies, "JAPAN, RUSSIA SEEK TO MOVE ON FROM ISLAND DISPUTE," Tokyo, 01/08/03) reported that Japan and Russia will try to push aside their niggling dispute over the ownership of four barren islands this week, focusing instead on the more pressing issues of a

troublesome DPRK and stronger economic ties. Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi heads to Russia Thursday for a four-day trip, the first state visit by a Japanese leader since 1998, including talks with President Vladimir Putin on January 10 and a visit to the far eastern city of Khabarovsk. While both sides remain stubborn over the islands seized by the Soviet Union in the waning days of the Second World War, which has prevented them signing a formal peace treaty, the relationship is showing new signs of maturity, analysts say. "Things are different now," said diplomatic commentator Tetsuya Ozeki. "The peace treaty is important, but there are bigger issues to deal with, such as terrorism and North Korea." Japan said in the past that a close relationship would be difficult if the islands weren't returned, which was extremely unrealistic," he added. "Now, both sides are taking steps that are quieter but more productive." Among them will be the signing by Koizumi and Putin of a declaration that lays out a framework for broad cooperation on a range of issues from diplomacy to economics. Analysts say a peace treaty remains distant, citing Putin's reluctance to cede even an inch of Russian soil and Japan's refusal to give in, both sides hemmed in by the demands of nationalists at home. Koizumi has repeatedly said that the four islands off the north of Japan -- known here as the Northern Territories and in Russia as the Southern Kuriles -- are Japanese, and that Russia must acknowledge this. Given their limited strategic and economic value, the only real benefit to Japan would be a huge boost in the popularity of the prime minister who gains their return. "It may appear this time that Japan is moderating its stance on the islands, but nothing has changed," Hakamada said. "If the island issue is raised now, there's very little chance of any progress," he added. "And if Japan makes too much fuss over it, they'll appear weak. That's all."

10. US Missile Defense

The Associated Press (Robert Burns, "PENTAGON CANCELS TWO MISSILE INTERCEPT TESTS, SAVING $200 MILLION," Washington, 01/08/03) reported that the Pentagon agency that is developing defenses against missile attack has decided to skip two tests of its ability to intercept mock warheads in space, saving about US$200 million, an official said Wednesday. The tests were to have been held this winter and spring. Air Force Lt. Col. Rick Lehner, spokesman for the Missile Defense Agency, said there will not be another intercept test until Boeing Co., the lead contractor, has a newly designed rocket booster ready for use this autumn. "The feeling is that we need to concentrate on the booster this year because it is behind" schedule, Lehner said. Pentagon officials have said they are confident that their basic approach to intercepting enemy warheads during their flight through space - known as "hit to kill" technology - has been proven to work in previous tests. What has been lacking is the new booster that launches the "hit to kill" technology into space. Boeing originally was to begin flight tests of a new booster - used to carry a missile-intercept device known as a "kill vehicle" into space to destroy an enemy warhead by colliding with it - in 2000, but it encountered technical problems. After a booster launch failure in December 2001, Boeing decided to contract with Lockheed Martin, and later Orbital Sciences, to come up with new designs for an intercept booster. In previous intercept tests - the most recent of which failed in December - the Missile Defense Agency used an older modified Minuteman as a surrogate booster. In some cases the surrogate malfunctioned. The goal all along has been to develop a new-generation booster designed specifically for missile defense. In announcing last month how his agency intends to meet President George W. Bush (news - web sites)'s goal of having an initial missile defense system ready to field by the end of 2004, Air Force Lt. Gen. Ronald Kadish told reporters he was concerned about the booster problem. "I don't like where we are in terms of being developed with the boosters," Kadish said. If Boeing fails to come up with a useable booster by next autumn, the overall missile defense program will suffer, he said. "We can't use an interceptor that doesn't fly right," he said. Lehner, spokesman for Kadish's agency, said that forgoing the intercept tests that had been scheduled for this winter and spring will save not only the $200 million it costs to conduct the tests but also the "kill vehicles" that are used, and thus destroyed, in the tests. The Pentagon has been

successful in four of its last five missile intercept tests and five of its last eight.

II. Republic of Korea

1. DPRK Following IAEA Directions?

Joongang Ilbo (Kim Young-sae, "SEOUL BIDS PYEONGYANG RESPECT IAEA OBLIGATIONS," Seoul, 01/08/03) reported that ROK government said Tuesday that DPRK must respect the International Atomic Energy Agency's resolution, by conscientiously and swiftly carrying out its obligations as a party to the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty. ROK government said that it hoped that DPRK would not let a precious opportunity for a diplomatic and peaceful resolution to the nuclear issue slip away. The IAEA board of governors early Tuesday called on DPRK to restore surveillance measures at its nuclear facilities and to clarify the status of its reported uranium-enrichment program. The resolution did not say whether the agency would refer the matter to the United Nations Security Council if DPRK did not respond positively. But ROK government official here said most of the board's member countries would not wait long. The international nuclear agency's director general, Mohamed ElBaradei, said DPRK was being given another opportunity to comply. Compliance rather than defiance will open the way to a dialogue to address its security and other concerns, he said. Mr. ElBaradei also said that further noncompliance would trigger a report to the Security Council under the agency's statute.

2. US Stance to DPRK

Joongang Ilbo (Kim Jin, "BUSH SOFTENING NO-TALKS STANCE," Washington, 01/08/03) reported that US President George W. Bush reiterated Tuesday that US has no intention of invading DPRK and called on DPRK to comply with its international obligations. He also said the DPRK nuclear issue would be resolved peacefully and diplomatically. President Bush said US would have dialogue with DPRK, but other officials said talks would have to be preceded by DPRK disavowing nuclear ambitions. The members of the Trilateral Coordination and Oversight Group, a consultative council on DPRK issues of ROK, Japan and US, began meetings Tuesday in Washington. An ROK government official said after a bilateral meeting with US officials that they had agreed that it was necessary for DPRK to take steps to dismantle its nuclear program before there could be a resolution to the issue. The official said the two sides agreed on the urgency of the situation and would join in a diplomatic effort to persuade DPRK to take positive measures. He added that reports of ROK's plan to mediate between US and DPRK with a compromise proposal were not appropriate.

3. Anti-US Sentiment in ROK

Chosun Ilbo (Kim Min-bai, "PRESIDENT SAYS POLL SHOWS SUPPORT FOR USFK," Seoul, 01/08/03) reported that President Kim Dae-jung said Tuesday a recent opinion poll result showed the majority of ROK citizens oppose the withdrawal of US Forces Korea, and therefore interpreting the series of candlelight vigils as anti-American was not appropriate. President Kim said at a cabinet meeting that demanding a change in the Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) was based on the premise of US forces being present in the country. Upon designating 71 tasks for ministries to complete by February 25, Kim requested the heads of ministries and government agencies to do their best and leave office with no regrets.

4. Inter Korean Flight Increased

Chosun Ilbo (Lee Wi-ja, "INTER KOREAN FLIGHTS INCREASE FIVE-FOLD," Seoul, 01/08/03) The Ministry of Construction and Transportation announced Tuesday that a total of 69 flights occurred between DPRK and ROK last year, a fivefold increase from 2001. The number of inter-Korean flights has shown a drastic increase after the inter-Korean summit on June 15, 2000. DPRK's Air Koryo flew the inter-Korean air route 32 times, Korean Air and Asiana Airlines, 30 times and there were seven special flights carrying envoys such as Lim Dong-won and James Kelly. 55 of the inter-Korean flights traveled via the Yellow Sea and 14 flights that carried members of the Busan Asian Games and Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organization (KEDO) used a route crossing the East Sea.

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Produced by the Nautilus Institute for Security and Sustainable Development in partnership with:

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